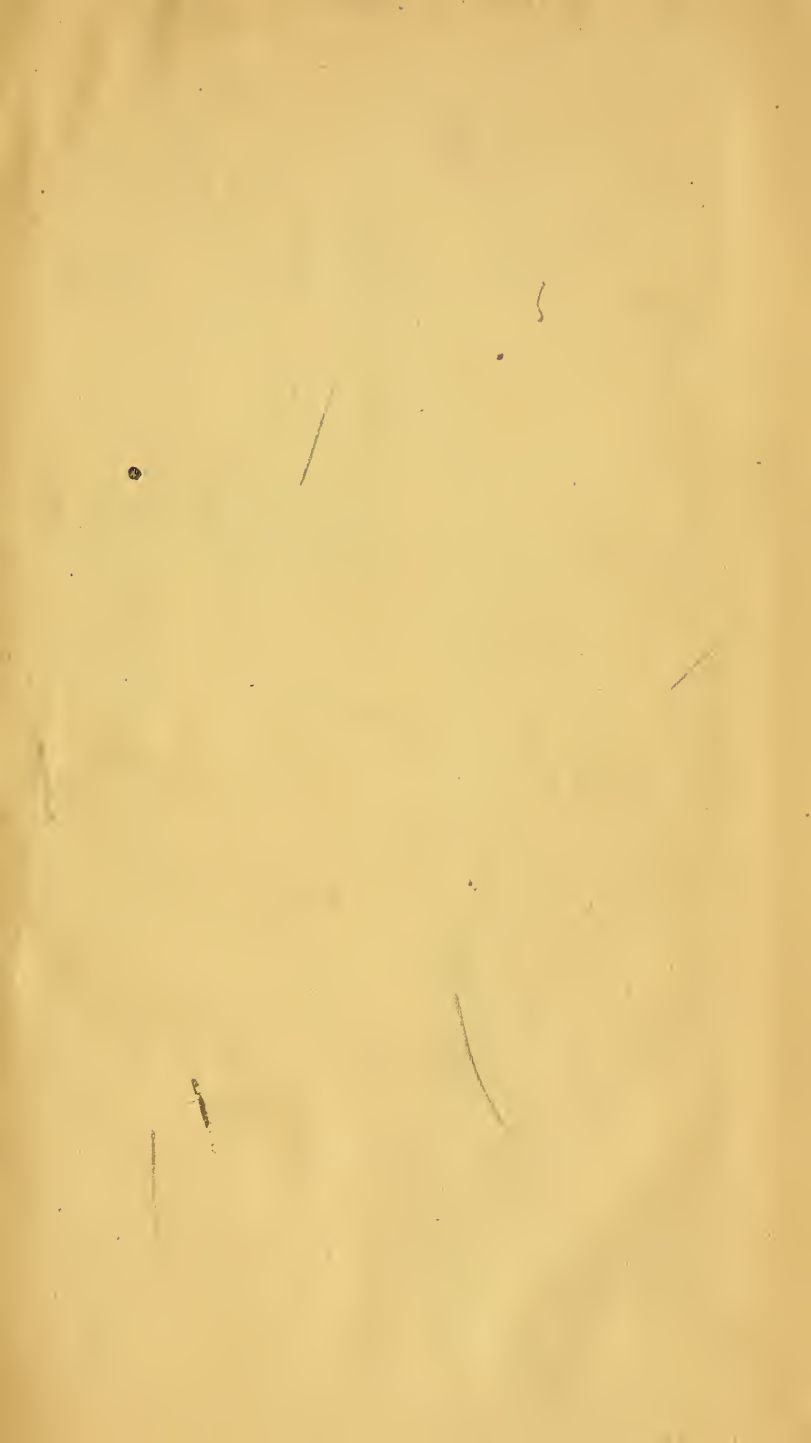


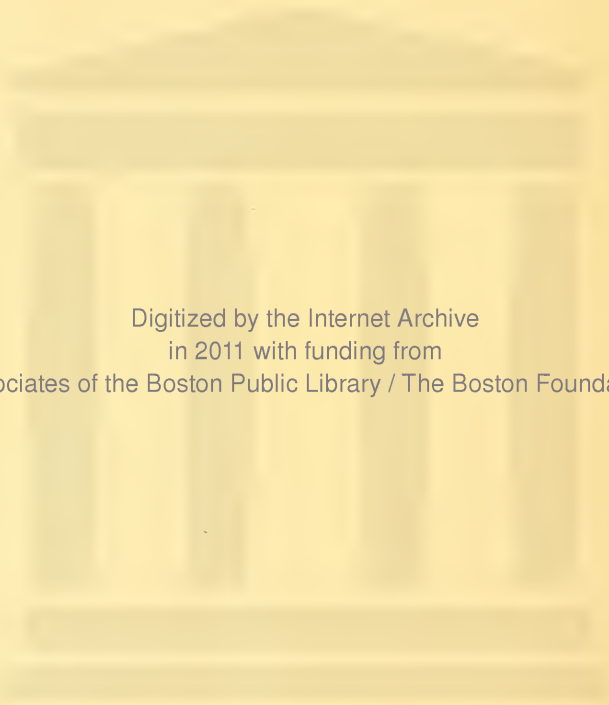
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*C. Stuart to R. D. Hincks*  
*With affectionate regards*  
*Middletown. 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1834*

## IS SLAVERY DEFENSIBLE FROM SCRIPTURE?

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TO THE REV. DR. HINCKS,  
KILLILEAGH.

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SIR,

THE question in which we are engaged, viz. "*Whether or not Slavery is defensible from Scripture*," being of universal importance, and involving alike the glory of God, and the happiness of man, I assail, in this letter, not you *individually*; but your doctrines, together with all who support them—and I address *you*, merely because you have been pleased to assail me publicly, by name, and thereby to demand from *me* a public refutation of your views.

Let us remember, that "knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth," and "if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet, as he ought to know." 1 Cor. viii. 1, 2. I therefore invite you here to take leave with me of every personality, and to come along with me seriously to the discussion of our subject—a sacred subject; the fundamental merits of which would be the same, although Dr. HINCKS and C. STUART had never existed; and which would yet remain the same, although we were instantly swept away by the same Holy Providence, which has hitherto sustained us.

And first, I wish to observe, that when I speak of "*Slavery*," I mean "*any kind of forced service, in perpetuity, for another's benefit, and not as a lawful punishment, for the individual's own crimes.*"

It is against this which I argue, in all its forms, whether it possess the concocted poison which pervades the whole frame of West Indian Slavery, or whether it merely exhibit the mildest of its forms, scattered, as we find it, in the domestic bondage of the East.

Let us here endeavour to set aside a few superficial obstructions.

It is strangely pretended that Abraham was a slave master.

Let us look to the evidence:—

We read in Gen. xii. 16, that Abraham had men-servants and maid-servants, &c. the gifts to him apparently of Pharaoh—and in Gen. xx. 14, that Abimelech, King of Gerar, gave him men-servants and women-servants, &c.

In Gen. xiv. 14, we are told of Abraham's trained servants, born in his house, 318 souls; and in xv. 2, of "this Eliezer of Damascus."

In Gen. xvii. 12, we find that he was bound to circumcise all the souls of his household, whether born in his house, or bought with his money; in Gen.

xvii. 23, that he did so ; and in Gen. xviii. 19, that he commanded his children and his household after him, to keep the way of the Lord, and to do justice and judgment.

In Gen. xxiv. 2, we learn, that his eldest servant of his house ruled over all that he had ; and in Gen. xxiv. 17-20, 29-32, that this ruling servant, together with his fellow-servants, was received and entertained, in the most honorable manner, by Rebecca and her family.

Now what do these things teach us ?

Is it not, plainly, that Abraham's servants were confidential—were entrusted with arms—rose to the highest offices, and were in his family like children—that he was not only bound to circumcise and instruct them, but that he did so—and that they were entertained as equals by persons of the highest rank ?

But, you may observe, that some of Abraham's servants were bought with his money, and many were given him by Pharaoh and Abimelech, in common with cattle.

I reply, that we are not speaking of their condition before they got into Abraham's possession ; but after they became his. I presume you would not attempt to defend, from Scripture, the habits of Pharaoh's and Abimelech's households. Abraham was clearly, in the great prevailing features of his character, a good man. Now why would a good man buy servants ? Could it be, that, without a crime on their part, he might subject them to forced labour, in perpetuity, for his own emolument ? or could he receive servants from others, for this purpose ? or if he did, could he be a good man ? or if a good man can fatten with his family, upon the forced toil in perpetuity of his guiltless fellow-man, what is he good for ? or, wherein does he differ from a bad man ? or what is the meaning of language—or, if not to persons who so speak, to whom does the woe belong, denounced in Isaiah, v. 20, "Woe unto them, that call evil, good—and good, evil," &c. &c.

But palpable as this truth is, we are not left solely to it. God has graciously thrown his own radiance around it, by recording to us as above, the actual condition of Abraham's servants. We find that it was undeniably a highly honorable and happy condition. In the whole record which we have of it, there is no trace of force, or tyranny, or selfishness ; for instance, look at Abraham's conduct, as recorded in the last verse of xiv. Genesis, where he steadily refuses all reward from the King of Sodom ; but displays the most parental attention to his young men, or his servants, as they are called in the 15th verse.

Now, as words in themselves have no meaning, we might call this what we please—but when the word *Slavery* has received the meaning which it has received amongst us, to call a condition, so highly honorable and happy, as the condition of Abraham's servants was, by the term *Slavery*, is plainly confounding all language, for it is attaching a term which signifies dishonor, to that which was honourable ; and wretchedness, to that which was happy.

But perhaps you may say that the term servant ought to be slave.

I ask you for your authority.

Our translation of the Bible is not indeed perfect, for it is human—but it is singularly excellent. The translators give us evidence in it, that they were not ignorant of the different terms, *servant*, *bondman*, and *slave* ; and that they did not confound those terms together—for instance, in Genesis, xlvii. 19, they translate "servants"—in Deuteronomy, xv. 15, they translate "bondman"—in Job. xxxi. 13, "man-servant and maid-servant"—and in Revelation xviii. 13, "slaves"—They have therefore undeniably recorded their solemn testimony

in favour of the words as we find them in our Bible ; and I know not any body of men to whose opinions we might more safely refer.

But still they were men—and it is admitted that there are defects in the translation. You say, that wherever we find in our Bible the word *man-servant*, or *maid-servant*, they ought to be, “ male or female slave.”

I ask you for your authority.

I find that the Jews had in their families, both *hired* and *bond* servants—Leviticus xxv. 39, 40, and same chapter, verses 45, 46.

I find the word *Obed*, plainly signifying both of these—for instance, Exodus, xxi. 2. If thou buy an Hebrew servant (*Obed*), &c. Now, could this man be a slave? No, for we read in Leviticus, xxv. 39, 40, “ and if thy brother, by thee, be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee, thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond-servant, (*Obed*) but as an hired servant, &c.” “ for they are my servants, &c. (*Obedim*) verse 42.

I find the same word (*Obed*) generally translated *servant*.

Now how do you prove, that when this word is translated *man-servant*, it ought to be *slave*.

You attempt to prove it, by Exodus xx. 10, “ thou shalt not do any work ; thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter ; thy man servant, nor thy maid-servant,” &c.

But how do you prove that the Jewish household servants consisted of *bond-servants* only, since, as above shewn, the Jews unquestionably had hired servants as well as bond-servants in their families? Or, how do you prove, that the bond-servant amongst the Jews could, with any fairness of language, be designated by our term *Slave*? That this is impossible I trust presently to show. Or, how do you prove, that the very command, which so solemnly enjoins the due observance of the Sabbath, sanctions a condition, which, as far as relates to West Indian Slavery at least, almost universally and unavoidably entails the desecration of the Sabbath ; for, as is abundantly attested, the great body of the field slaves in Jamaica and Trinidad must work on the Sabbath day, or starve—or, admitting the fact, that there were both *hired* and *bond-servants* in the families of the Jews, how do you prove that the commandment related to the *bond-servants only* ; or, again, that these bond-servants, in any fair use of the English language, might better be called “ slaves,” as you would have it, than *servants*, as the admirable translators of our excellent version have chosen.

But again, you attempt to defend the same idea, from Exodus, xx. 17, “ Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife, &c.” “ nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant,” &c.

How do you prove that the hired servants of the family were excluded from the prohibition?—or, would you think yourself justifiable as a Christian, in coveting your neighbour’s servant now, because he was not a slave—or what would you think of me, if I were to covet your hired servant, and then pretend that the law of God only forbade my coveting slaves.

Or, in another point of view, is it an evil coveting in us, when we covet to get our neighbours’ slaves set free immediately from the most degrading and destructive *tyranny*, and immediately made, alike with their tyrants, the subjects of wise and *equitable* laws?—or if this be an evil coveting, what do the Scriptures mean when they say, in 1 Corinthians, xii. 31—“ But covet earnestly the best gifts,” in close connexion with the more excellent way shewn immediately afterwards, in the 13th chapter, where God so beautifully reveals to us the fundamental character of charity or love—Or who are *they* that covet wickedly, they who covet earnestly without any interest, but the interest of holy love, that the oppressed



should be let go free—that the wronged should be righted—that the poor should be considered—that legalised robbery and murder should cease without delay?—Or, *they* who resolve all *equity*, into a partial regard for the master, while they are willing to leave the poor slave trodden down, pining and consumed, until the money of his proud and sordid oppressor can first be secured to him?

Most evidently in relation to both these commandments, the precept was to the *whole household*, parents, children, servants and all—and in the fact, that our translators have chosen the term *servants*, instead of slaves, I find a two-fold evidence of their correctness—1st, because it would be an abuse of all propriety in language, to call the Jewish bond-servants by the title of slaves, as I trust presently to prove; the two conditions being fundamentally different—and 2ndly, because a bond-servant, is a servant—but a servant, or a hired servant, is not a bond-servant.—In calling both therefore by the term *servant*, the translators have chosen a term, which correctly comprises both; but if they had preferred the term bond-servant, they would have omitted hired servants from the command, and thus converted a law, which plainly extends over the whole household, into a law, relating to a part of it only.

But if a translator, or an interpreter of Scripture, is at liberty to do this, what is the meaning of Rev. xxii. 19?

That Abraham had servants in his family, who were bought with his money, and that he received presents of servants from others, I believe from the Scriptures—and that these were bondsmen, before they came into his possession, I have no doubt; but that he bought them, or received them, that he might keep them as slaves; or that he did keep them as slaves, I cannot believe for a moment, without setting all evidence from the Scripture, at defiance. The condition of Abraham's servants, is therein distinctly recorded to me, to have been highly confidential, honorable and happy, and we all know that the condition of a slave with us, is neither happy, honorable or confidential. Abraham is therein distinctly declared to have been, in his prevailing character, a singularly good man; and I know that it is a ruinous abuse of all language, to call any man a good man, who will buy or receive, and keep for his own emolument, a brother man, however poor, or helpless, or wretched, he may be, in a state of forced servitude in perpetuity.

Last Summer, the Methodists purchased a slave on the Gambia—But was it to keep him in bondage?—No—it was to make him free, and to send him a herald of freedom to others—But were the Methodists superior to Abraham?

Three years ago, a negro slave was purchased in New York from one of the Southern States, chiefly through the agency of the Rev. Mr. Coxe.—But was it to keep him in slavery?—No—but it was to send him back to his native country; and he was sent back—Was Mr. Coxe superior to Abraham?

Forty years ago, Samuel Nottingham, of Tortola, received between 20 and 30 slaves by bequest—But did he receive them, that he might keep them, and compel them to work in perpetuity, for his own emolument?—No—as soon as they were his, he made them free—and from the day of their freedom, even up to the present day, the Nottinghams of Tortola have been an honor to the Island—But was Samuel Nottingham superior to Abraham?

No—most clearly.—But the Methodists, and Mr. Coxe of New York, and Samuel Nottingham, in these particulars, acted like Christians—and that such multitudes act otherwise, is merely an evidence, that still, as of old, “wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat;” and still, “strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” Abraham, as a friend



of God, was clearly one of those few, who found it—and every thing that is recorded to us of the condition of his *servants*, shews unanswerably that he was their father and their friend, and not their tyrant—and that their honor and happiness were dear to him, and were never sacrificed to his own proud and selfish emolument.

The Divine will under the Jewish dispensation, respecting the sending back by force of servants who had run away from their masters, is clearly revealed in Deut. xxiii. 15. “Thou shalt not deliver unto his master, the servant “ (Obed) which is escaped from his master unto thee”—16, “He shall dwell “ with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose, in one of “ thy gates, where it liketh him best: thou shalt not oppress him.”

And we find evidently, that this is the Divine mind still, by the great law of love, which pervades the New Testament, and by the case of Paul, who retained for some time under his ministry, the runaway bondman Onesimus—and who, in sending him back afterwards, did not send him back as a bondman, but as a “brother beloved,” *both in the flesh* and in the Lord—Phil. 16.

The case of Hagar is, plainly, one of those exceptions, which every wise lawgiver makes at his discretion, in his own laws; but which no inferior authority has a right to make. The angel of the Lord, in commanding her to return to her mistress, merely gave her a precept peculiar to herself, without at all infringing upon the general law as revealed in Deut. xxiii. 15. 16.—But this no more sanctions the forcing back of slaves to their masters, than a particular precept from the magistrates, requiring me to seize an individual, would authorise my seizing every such individual I met with, in the face of an established and general law of the government forbidding me to do so.

It is further strangely pretended, that the Negroes, being the descendants of Ham, are under the divine curse, and that we, therefore, are constituted the executioners of that curse, by divine authority.

But this proposition contains several remarkable fallacies—

1st. The curse in question has no more to do with Ham, or *with his descendants generally*, than it has to do with you and me; or than a particular disaster, attaching personally to one of your children, would attach equally to all your children, merely because they were your children.

The curse is simply against Canaan, Gen. ix. 25. I know that learned men have endeavoured to explain away God’s words here; but I can have no hesitation in preferring *His* testimony to *theirs*. This curse we find extended afterwards to the descendants of Canaan, viz :—

Gen. ix. 25. Canaan is cursed.

x. 15. The descendants of Canaan.

xv. 19, 21.)

Ex. xxiii. 23. } Recapitulation of the same, that is, of the descendants of Canaan.

xxxiv. 11. }

Deut. vii. 1. These same nations, that is, the descendants of Canaan, to be utterly destroyed.

Judges i. 21, 27, 35. Conquered, but not utterly destroyed.

1 Kings, ix. 20, 21. Their remnants subjected to tribute of bond service. (See also 2 Chron. viii. 7, 9.)

2 Chron. ii. 17, 18. Subjected to menial labour.

Observe—The Edomites and Egyptians were near neighbours of the Jews, but, not belonging to the same class of divinely condemned people, were expressly excepted from the same curse.—Deut. xxiii. 7, 8.

Observe also, that all bondage between Jew and Jew was forbidden.—Lev. xxv. 39, 40.

1 Kings, ix. 22. Solomon obeyed this prohibition.

2 Chronicles, xxviii. 10. The Israelites disobeyed it, but repented and freed their brethren.

Nehemiah, v. 1, 13. The Jews were again guilty of keeping their brethren in bondage, but again repented.

Jeremiah, xxxiv. 8, 17. The Jews again sinned, and a liberty was given to the sword to destroy them.

Zachariah, vii. 8, 14. Their destruction.

2d. The curse denounced against Canaan in Gen. ix. 25, is merely prophetic—his descendants clearly were not punished for *his* crimes, but for *their own*. But even if it were otherwise, prophecy does not sanction the crimes of those who fulfil it. Gen. xv. 13, 14—See also Deut. xxx. 1, 3, 7; and Acts, ii. 23.

3d. Some pretend that the Negroes are not descended from Ham, but from Canaan; but this is evidently nothing but a subterfuge.

All history assures us that Egypt was the first part of Africa which was peopled.

We know from the Bible, that Ham, and not Canaan, peopled Egypt.

Genesis, x. 6.

Psalms, lxxviii. 51.

cv. 23, 27.

cvi. 21, 22.

And from Egypt, clearly, the population of Africa diverged, by natural progression, to either side of the great desert. The Colonies planted long afterwards in Barbary, by the Phœnicians, no more prove that the Negroes were descended from Canaan, than the fact that the Phœnicians visited Ireland proves, that the Irish also are Canaanites, and ought to be enslaved.

We will now, if you please, enter upon our general question, viz :—

Is *Slavery* defensible from Scripture?

Please remember, that I mean by *Slavery* “any kind of forced service in “perpetuity, for another’s benefit, and not as a lawful punishment for crime:” and by West Indian Slavery, that particular and most atrocious kind of it, which exists in our Slave Colonies.

If Slavery, in either of these senses, be defensible from Scripture, then one or other of the two following things must be the case—

I. There must be some general law in Scripture, rendering Slavery of every kind lawful at all times, and under every circumstance—or,

2. There must be some particular species of Slavery in Scripture, sanctioned there by the divine authority, similar to that for which we plead; and we must shew an equal sanction for its existence now, as there was for the same of old.

Now, do we find any general law in Scripture, rendering Slavery of every kind lawful at all times, and under every circumstance?

Most clearly not.

For thus saith the Lord, Matt. xxii. 37, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.” 39—“And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.” And this holy, just and good law, is called, James i. 25, “the perfect law of liberty.”

But to all general rules there are exceptions—the same authority which makes the law can make the exception—and these exceptions, being made by the same authority which made the law, are equally valid with it.

Do we find, then, any exception in the divine law, sanctioning Slavery, such as the West Indian?

Six species of servitude, or bondage, are mentioned in Scripture.

1. Abrahamic servitude.
2. Egyptian bondage.
3. Jewish servitude, between Jew and Jew.
4. Jewish bondage, of Jews to Canaanites, &c.
5. Jewish bondage, of Canaanites to Jews.
6. Roman bondage.

Of these we may observe, that Egyptian bondage, the bondage of the Jews to the Canaanites, and Roman bondage, were merely evolutions of human wickedness, and had no further sanction from God than any other crime has, which He refrains from immediately extinguishing. For this crime, amongst others, the Egyptians and Canaanites were fearfully punished; and in relation to this, as well as in regard to every other atrocity in the dark catalogue of the vices which characterised them, the Romans were divinely informed, that they must repent or perish. "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."—1 John, iii. 14.

If any one should here observe, "but were not servants commanded to be obedient to their masters," and does not the Greek word signify "Slave" as well as servant, and is not this a divine authority for Roman bondage—

I reply—

1. The question here does not relate to the duty of the bondsman, but to the duty of the master. No man ought to return wrong for wrong—yet clearly this does not sanction the doing of wrong—it is my duty to suffer injuries meekly, but this gives no man any sanction to injure me—the man who injures me is not less criminal, because I have no right to retaliate, and to be as wicked as he is. Thus, though it is the duty of bondsmen to obey, the master has plainly no right to oppress—it is his duty to give to his servants or bondsmen that which is just and equal.—Col. iv. 1. He must do it at the peril of his soul; and if any man can believe that he gives to his brother man that which is just and equal, while he keeps him in forced servitude, I can only deplore the deadness of that man's conscience, and the danger of his soul.

Wives, in the time of our Lord, were slaves as much as bondsmen were, and wives were commanded to be obedient to their husbands. Did this sanction husbands in keeping their wives in slavery?

Fathers had a right to abuse their children even more than they had to abuse their slaves, and children were commanded to obey their parents. Did this sanction such atrocious rights in fathers?

The Roman Emperors were armed with despotic power, and their subjects were commanded to obey them. Did this render despotic power right?

Most clearly, no—the tyrannic power of masters, and husbands, and fathers, and emperors, was wrong. It was an atrocious usurpation upon the prerogatives of God, and upon the rights of man. All such power exists at its own peril, and is at open war with everlasting truth and love. God has laid the axe to its roots, by the Gospel—it must perish—neither will its destruction be the less complete or the less fearful, because of the multitudes which it destroys, or because of the honourable and the learned who defend it.

With respect to the other three species, viz. Abrahamic, the servitude of Jew with Jew, and the bondage of the nations of Canaan, several things are to be observed.



1. Of Abrahamic servitude we have spoken already.

2. All bondage between Jew and Jew was forbidden—Lev. xxv. 39, 40.—The only servitude authorised between them was hired service.

3 The bondage of the Canaanitish nations.

This was plainly a judicial punishment, the awful reward of their own guilt. God saw them proud in their crimes, and hardening themselves in their iniquities; but he was long-suffering toward them, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.—(2 Peter, iii. 9.) Neither would He permit them to be cut off, while yet their iniquity was not full.—(Gen. xv. 16.) But when, like the Jews themselves afterwards, (Matt. xxiii. 31, 33.) the nations of Canaan had filled up the measure of their fathers; when mercy, if it had been prolonged, would have been a license to crime; and justice if it had refrained from striking, would have dishonoured itself; the righteous judgment of God was promulgated against them, and they were condemned to be destroyed.—Deut. vii. 2, 5, 23, 24. Exod. xx. 27, 33.

But the Jews only partially executed this sentence. Many of these people were preserved, and remained among and around the Jews. Of these were the bondmen and bondwomen mentioned in Lev. xxv. 44, 46. They were specifically given as a possession to the Jews. They were given as condemned criminals. They were given, not as a general law, warranting all men to keep bondmen, but as a particular dispensation, peculiar to the Jews, and to the condemned nations of Canaan.

They were also given plainly, not as a blessing to the Jews, but as a righteous judgment upon the heathen. To the Jews, they were always snares—Joshua, xxiii. 12, 13, and Judges, viii. 29, 35, and ix. 1, 6. And thus, a departure from the fundamental principles of godliness; and thus, the possession of despotic power, continue to be snares of the most dreadful description, even unto this day.

But say some, God governs by universal rules—and changes not—what is once right with Him, is always right. There are no parentheses in His government.

Granted, we reply, partly. In one sense, this is clearly true—but in another, it is as evidently false.

God's universal rule, always and every where binding, is a rule of equity, a law of holy love—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will to man," is one of its beauteous mottos—To love the Lord our God, with all our heart and mind, and soul and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves, are its two fundamental principles. In these God's law changes not—and whatever is apparently at variance with these, is evidently parenthetical.

But is there any thing which seems to be at variance with these?

The law of marriage is evidently part of this holy and unchangeable law.

But what was the concubinage of Abraham? Gen. xxv. 6.

What was the bigamy of the Jewish law? Deut. xxi. 15.

What was the divorce of the same? Deut. xxiv. 1.

What was the polygamy of David? II. Sam. iii. 1—5 and v. 13.

The law of holy love, is evidently God's unchangeable law; but what was the law of jealousy? Numb. v.

Of witchcraft? Exod. xxii. 18.

Of killing children? Deut. xxi. 18—21.

These were plainly the parentheses—the exceptions, made for particular purposes, at peculiar times—and valid only while their purpose lasted; but self-

evidently incapable of universal application—and incapable of any application, but by the divine and supreme authority.

Reverse this, and suppose that these things formed the universal law, and the law of holy love and equity, the exceptions; and immediately, we have concubinage, bigamy, polygamy, arbitrary divorce, jealousy, the killing of witches, and the destruction of children, made universally lawful—and love and equity, become exceptions, here and there timidly peeping out like the snowdrop on the cold and stormy bosom of the winter.

This clearly cannot be the fact. The law of God is the law of love, of purity, of justice, of perfect liberty, and when we find such things as the above permitted or appointed for a time, it is plainly, as God tell us, on account of the hardness of mens' hearts. (Mat. xix. 8.) The Supreme and Divine authority alone can sanction them for a moment, and to carry this sanction an inch beyond the limit appointed them of God, is clearly turning the grace of God into licentiousness. It is usurping the prerogative of Jehovah. It is devising with the taper of man's intellect, what nothing but infinite wisdom can rightly devise. It is doing from motives of cupidity and pride, what nothing, but infinite love and justice can authorise. It is pleading for that most *inequitable* kind of *equity*, for which some men plead, when they mean by *equity*, a proud and partial regard to the *rights*, as *they call them*, of the master, and a sovereign contempt for the sacred and inalienable rights of the wronged and plundered slave.

But God is love. He is no respecter of persons—with Him, black and white, and rich and poor, are all alike. His law, is the perfect law of liberty.—James i. 25. His will is, that men should love one another, with pure hearts fervently, each esteeming the other better than himself; and he requires that the greatest should be as a servant. Math. xxiii. 11. In enjoining the slave to be subject to his master, the subject to his King, the child to the parent, and the wife to her husband, he plainly does not sanction the iniquitous power which wickedness has usurped in any of these relations, but refraining with long-suffering love, from righteous vengeance, (Rom. ii. 4.) he lays the axe to the root of all oppression, by His royal law of liberty, the law of holy and equal love. He tells the slave that there is a better condition than that of slavery, and directs him, if he may be made free, to use it rather; and to put the matter beyond all doubt, he sends back the runaway slave Onesimus, as before mentioned, *not as a slave*, but as *a brother beloved*, both *in the flesh*, and *in the Lord*. Phil. xvi.

The following table may shew the difference between Jewish Bondage and West Indian Slavery:—

#### WEST INDIAN SLAVERY.

1. Stealing men, and keeping and selling stolen men, lawful.
2. Forced and involuntary—not as a punishment for crime, but to subserve the proud and selfish interests of others.

#### JEWISH BONDAGE.

1. Unlawful. Exodus, xxi. 16.  
Deut. xxiv. 7.  
1 Tim. i. 10.
2. Sometimes voluntary. Lev. xxv. 47.  
Sometimes a judgment of God.  
Deut. xx. 14.  
Sometimes a judgment of magistrates.  
Matt. xviii. 25.

~~Sometimes a judgment of God.~~

~~2 Kings, i. 17.~~

~~2 Kings, i. 17.~~

## WEST INDIAN SLAVERY.

3. Perpetual.
4. Negro or colored strangers, seized and treated like slaves.
5. Personal injuries seldom punished.
6. Utterly degraded.
7. Rejected from domestic alliances, and treated with the greatest indignity.
8. Slave children regarded and treated like brutes.
9. Unequal law.
10. No independent property—(chartered Colonies).
11. Masters have a right to exclude slaves from religious instruction.
12. No respite.
13. Runaways must be delivered up.
14. Christians kept in slavery, and their condition often aggravated.
15. Women kept in the most degraded and wretched state.
16. Degraded even in the worship of God.

## JEWISH BONDAGE

3. Limited to six years amongst the Jews themselves, with handsome provisions upon departing free. Deut. xv. 12-15. Exod. xxi. 2, 3. To have productions of Sabbatical years (common to all). Lev. xxv. 4, 7. The 50th year a jubilee to all. Lev. xxv. 10.
4. All strangers to be kindly treated. Lev. xix. 33, 34. Exod. xxiii. 9. Deut. x. 17-19. xvi. 18-20.
5. The loss of an eye or a tooth (or, say the Jewish Doctors, any hurt which left a permanent mark) entitled to pardon. Exod. xxi. 26, 27.
6. Upon an equality with their masters. 1 Sam. ix. 3, 22. 2 Kings, v. 20, 21, 25. Prov. xvii. 2. Gen. xv. 2, 3. xxiv. 2.
7. Intermarried. 1 Chron. ii. 24, 25. Sometimes served by highest people. Gen. xxiv. 2, 18, 32, 34, 54. Abraham's servant; Rebecca. Exod. xxi. 7-11.
8. Children of bondmen regarded equally with family. Gal. iv. 1.
9. Equal law. Exod. xii. 49. Lev. xxiv. 22. Numbers, xv. 14-16, 29. Deut. xxix. 10-15. Gen. xii. 49. Num. ix. 14.
10. Often wealthy. 2 Samuel, ix. 9, 10, 11.
11. Masters required to instruct their servants. Gen. xvii. 10-14. Deut. xxxi. 9-13. Josh. viii. 33.
12. Sabbath. Exod. xx. 10, 11. xxiii. 12. Deut. v. 14. Feasts. Deut. xii. 10-12, 17, 18. xvi. 9-17. 7th years. Lev. xxv. 1-7. Jubilee. Lev. xxv. 8-13.
13. Must not. Deut. xxiii. 15.
14. All bondage between Jew and Jew forbidden. Lev. xxv. 39.
15. Women to be married, given in marriage, treated as daughters, or freed. Exod. xxi. 7-11.
16. Upon an equality. Deut. xvi. 9-17.



These are the general differences. The only resemblance which I can find between West Indian Slavery and the Bondage of the Canaanites to the Jews, appears in Exodus, xxi. 20, 21. *There* we read—1st, that the bond-servant was considered as his master's money. This is exactly like West Indian Slavery.—2dly, That if the bond-servant did not die immediately upon ill-usage by his master, his death was not to be punished. This, also, is completely West Indian.—But, 3dly, we find that this bond-service amongst the Jews was ordained as a punishment of God, (Deut. xx. 10-18): whereas the only authority for West Indian bondage, is the authority of men; and this, not for the righteous punishment of wickedness in the slave, but for the unrighteous gratification of the pride, and the cupidity, and the lusts of the master.

The Scriptures are a garden of God—a glorious field, abounding with every herb of health and beauty; and the man who would search for slavery in the Bible, is like the man who would have sought for poison in paradise—he would be like Adam, if Adam, after eating the forbidden fruit, had cried out, “Oh, see how this tree has poisoned me,” instead of imputing the poison to his own rebelliousness. Yes, bondage may be found in the Bible; and the fierce judgment of God may be found in the Bible against slave-holders, Jer. xxxiv. 8-17. just as any other sin may be found in the Bible, together with the wrath of God, which is revealed there against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

Concubinage is to be found in the Bible.....	Gen. xxv. 6.
Bigamy.....	Deut. xxi. 15.
Polygamy .....	2 Sam. iii. 1-5
	2 Sam. v. 13.
Jealousy, (The Law of) .....	Numb. v. 11-31.
Divorce .....	Deut. xxiv. 1.
Witches, (Killing) .....	Exodus, xxii. 18.
Killing Children .....	Deut. xxi. 18-21.

But who would now do such things, because they are found in the Bible? who but the wicked?—and who but the wicked now keep slaves? Or do we err, in deeming the Arabs criminal, when they seize and enslave our friends that are wrecked on the fearful shores, south of Morocco? Or were we to discover a band of Englishmen enslaved in Africa, should we need any further evidence that they were wickedly enslaved, except the evidence that they were Englishmen? Or is God mistaken, when He places men stealers upon a par with parricides, and matricides, and Sodomites, and whoremongers, and perjured persons, and liars?

The bondage which is found in the Bible, is either an evidence of human wickedness—witness the bondage in which the Egyptians held the Jews—the bondage to which the Jews were repeatedly subjected by the heathen nations, and the Roman bondage.

Or, it was an exhibition of the judicial and righteous vengeance of the Supreme Lawgiver upon nations, which had filled up the measure of their iniquities, as in the case of the remnants of the nations of Canaan, who dwelt among the Jews and around them, and of whom, as a punishment for their crimes, the Jews were permitted to take bond-men and bond-women. Observe, this permission was given to the Jews only, for an especial purpose; but God has no where, by a similar revelation, constituted any other nation the executioners of

his righteous wrath. Every wicked man, indeed, in his crimes, like the Assyrian (Isaiah, x. 5-18), is the rod of God's anger—and, like the Assyrian, for a season, he may be fair and high—(Ezekiel, xxxi. 3-17)—But these rods are the thorns, not the flowers of God; they are his enemies, although he wields them, with a wisdom beyond their thought, and over-rules them with a power, which they seek in vain to defeat—they are the rods of his wrath, not to foster, but to destroy; and he tells them that their place is *hell*—Ezekiel xxxi. 16-17—They must repent or perish.

To call Abrahamic bond service, *Slavery*, is a senseless abuse of all language—and to call the bond service of Jew to Jew, *Slavery*, is giving it a different name from that which God gives it. He calls it *hired service*. Lev. xxv. 39-42—and when the Jews, in the time of Nehemiah, had converted it through their wickedness into bond service, they were rebuked and repented. Neh. v.; and when again they returned to their crime, in the time of Jeremiah, God proclaimed a liberty to the sword to destroy them. Jer. xxxiv.

It can only be matter of horror and amazement to any one whose conscience, in this particular, is not seared by falsehood, and who has the Bible in his hand, that *any one*, in possession of the Bible, should have tolerated for a moment, the supposition of *slavery* or of *forced service in perpetuity without a crime* being permitted, in the face of the full blaze of the perfect law of liberty and love. That there are such, is one of the most fearful evidences of the desperate alienation from God and its brother, of the human mind—and in the fact, that even learned men, and very learned and honourable men too, are amongst this number, we can only behold a mournful evidence, that not many wise after the flesh are called (1. Cor. i. 26); and the full force of the divine question is imprinted on our hearts, “Where is the wise—where is the scribe—where is the disputer of this world?—hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?” 1. Cor. i. 20.

Yes—For his name is love.

Yes—For His law is perfect liberty.

Yes—For His will is mutual and equal kindness.

Yes—And the slave master, and the defender of slavery, must repent or perish, for thus saith the Lord—He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. And where is the love for his brother, of the man, who, for his own proud or selfish purposes, keeps his brother in forced servitude?

Is God a slave master?

No; He loves a willing, not a forced service.

Is God's law a slave law?

No; it is the perfect law of liberty.

Was Christ a keeper of slaves?

No; though he was rich, yet made he himself poor, that we through his poverty might become rich. He made himself the servant of servants, and He has left us an example that we should follow His steps.

Did He preach slavery?

No; He proclaimed liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those that are bound. Is. lxi. 1.

Did he permit any kind of iniquity?

No; for his wrath is revealed from Heaven against all iniquity.

Where does slavery most prevail?

Where Christianity is least practised.

Where does liberty most flourish?

Where Christianity is most Christ-like.

For, “In this, the children of God are manifest, and the children of the de-

vil ; whosoever doeth not righteousness, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." 1 John, iii. 10.

" For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another."

And again, " Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." 1 John, iv. 11.

To recapitulate :—

If there be any law in Scripture, rendering Slavery of all kinds lawful every where and at all times, *then* West Indian Slavery is defensible from Scripture—but plainly, there is no such law.

Again, if there be in Scripture, any Slavery similar to West Indian, sanctioned of God, together with a particular revelation rendering the same lawful in the West, then West Indian Slavery is defensible from Scripture—but plainly there is no such thing.

Of the six kinds of bondage found in Scripture, we have seen—

1st, That it is a perfectly senseless abuse of all correctness in language, to call Abrahamic servitude, Slavery.

2d, That the bondage in which the Egyptians kept the Jews, was a crime punished of God.

3d, That bondage of Jew to Jew was forbidden, and when practised was punished.

4th, That the bondage into which the remnants of the Canaanitish nations or others brought the Jews at times, was their crime, and that God punished them for it.

5th, That Roman bondage was the crime of the Romans, and ceased in proportion as the Gospel was brought into action : and,

6th, That the sanctioned bondage of the remnants of the nations of Canaan to the Jews differed so largely, and so fundamentally from West India Slavery; that they cannot, in any fairness of language, be called by the same name. Besides, that God has given to the West Indians, no such peculiar authority as He gave to the Jews ; nor has He constituted them the ministers of His righteous Providence in any other sense, but as hell, with all the children of hell, subserve, though most unwillingly, His purposes of justice.

We find, farther, that God's universal and unchangeable law, is a law of holy love and equity ; and that the concubinage—the bigamy—the polygamy—the arbitrary divorces—the law of jealousy—the law of witchcraft—the killing of children, and the forced servitude, which we find in Scripture, are all alike at variance with this general law ; that they most evidently were only permitted or appointed for a particular purpose, at a particular age, by a particular revelation—and that they no more sanction the same things now, than the destruction of the nations of Canaan by the Jews would sanction a similarly exterminating warfare at this day.

We find, in short, that as Christianity advances, forced bondage of every kind recedes. That the call of God, is to perfect liberty. That the example and precepts of Christ teach man to prefer one another in honor. That the song of angels respecting this earth is, " Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will to men." That God, is love—That His law is love—That His example is love—That as He hath loved us, so ought we also to love one another.

And where then, is slavery, or *forced service, in perpetuity, not for crime, but for another's benefit ?*



Where ? but with them, who, in this particular, wrong their brother, and deny their God ! !

Yonder is the *slave master*. He says he loves his brother—and yet he keeps him in forced servitude, not for his brother's good, but for his own emolument. What is he ?

Yonder, is the *slave master* ! He is bolder than the other in his guilt—He does not even pretend to love his brother.—No—he confessedly riots upon his brother's plundered toil, and proudly spurns the relationship—in *his* eyes, the negro is his *beast*, not his brother. Yet he calls himself a Christian.—What is he ?

Yonder is the *slave master* ! He incessantly wrongs his brother, plundering him, *not out of love*, but for thirst of gold, of the most dear and sacred of human rights—Yet he dreams that he is going to heaven.—Whither is he going ?

Yonder is the slave—he has sinned—he repented not, and he is destroyed. But the oppression which makes even the wise man mad, (Eccl. vii. 7,) distracted him. He sinned, repented not, and perished. But God is love.—He never heard, and never could have heard the Gospel. His tyrant wore out his body, and kept his soul in darkness. He is in hell, for the sinner must perish. Nought that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, can enter the abodes of the blessed. But the worm gnaws not so fiercely—the fire burns with lesser torture. He groans, but he groans not so deeply—his God has considered him—he has been judged by the law which was given to him, and mercy has mitigated judgment. Luke, xii. 48.

But there is another groan.—Whose groan is it ?—It makes all hell tremble. It is the groan of the slave master ! He had the Gospel.—What was there that God could do for him, that He did not do ? But the more his mercies abounded, the more the slave master rebelled—and he crowned his tyranny, by shutting out the light of the Gospel from the soul of his poor slave.

There is another fire—for whom is it kindled ? See how it rages—The madness of hell is in its flames—who is the wretch that writhes in its vortex—It is the slave master !

There is another worm.—See how it gnaws.—It is the worm that never dies.—It is gnawing the slave master !

Oh, if there were pity in hell, his very slave might pity him.

Let us pity him now, that he may not perish, but repent ; for thus saith the Lord, Lev. xix. 17,—Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart : thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.

C. STUART.

Cotfield, 16th February, 1831.

P. S.—In the comparative view of Jewish Bondage and West Indian Slavery, pages 9 and 10, I have compressed under *three* heads, the various modes in which bondage originated amongst the Jews. The following detail is added, for the sake of those who may wish to explore the matter more minutely :—

- Genesis, xiv. 14.....Birth.
- xv. 3.....Ditto.
- xvii. 23-27.....Birth and Purchase.
- xxvii. 37.....Gift.
- xlvii. 19-21, 23-26.....Famine.
- Exodus, xxi. 5, 6.....Voluntary.
- xxi. 7, 11.....Purchase.
- xxii. 3.....For theft.
- Leviticus, xxv. 39-46.....Purchase.
- xxv. 47-49.....Voluntary.
- Joshua, ix. 14, 15, 21, 23, 27.....Gibeonites.
- 1 Samuel, viii. 10-18.....Despotic force.
- xvii. 8, 9.....War.
- 2 Kings, iv. 1.....For debt.
- Matthew, xviii. 25.....Ditto.

Observe, none of these is directly sanctioned as *bondage* by the Divine authority, excepting two, viz :

1st, The judicial punishment for theft and debt—Exodus, xxii. 3—2d Kings, iv. 1—and Matthew, xviii. 25.

2d, The judicial punishment of the impenitent nations of Canaan—Leviticus, xxv. 44-46—and, perhaps, Joshua, ix. 14, &c.









